



Donald Kasprzak
Mayor

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**2013 State of the City of Plattsburgh
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Since our first year in office in 2007, the City of Plattsburgh has faced unprecedented challenges. Historic tax and utility increases from 2000 to 2006 shaped our financial direction. A hundred year flood and Hurricane Irene directly impacted the city and region in a devastating manner. The loss of \$750,000 per year from Saranac Energy Partners and a \$1.4 million workers compensation payment from previous years severely affected our finances. North Country residents and business owners are still dealing with the national and state economic recession. State retirement, health care, and benefit costs have spiraled out of control. Foreclosures are at an all-time high. The legislative Tax Cap and unfunded mandates control a majority of our governing decisions for the city.

Yet despite all of these challenges and the lack of meaningful mandate reform from national and state elected officials, Plattsburgh persevered and maintained a steady course during these years while providing quality city services and stable tax and utility rates and 2012 was no exception.

In 2012, we invested in infrastructure improvements to our recreational fields, City Beach, City Water Filtration Plant, Water Pollution Control Plant, the Karen Fleury Bike Path, and our dams. The Durkee Street Parking Lot was repaved for the first time since the 1970's. We upgraded our sewer capabilities at the McDonough Monument along the Saranac River with a million dollar project which was long overdue and environmentally responsible. Street paving occurred albeit at a slower pace. The Saranac River Trail project was completed and enhancements are forthcoming. City officials continued to work closely with a local business group to improve and expand the City Beach facilities.

Commercial development, business expansions, and residential construction proceeded nicely in 2012. Bombardier, the McBride family, Plattsburgh State, Adirondack Family Chiropractic, CVPH, Kinney Drugs, Duke's Diner, Subway, and Big Apple Audio committed major investments in the city. Harbor View Phase III, Gregory Heights, Kriff Building, and Strand Theater projects are nearing completion. Two and four unit duplex and multi-residential development projects throughout the city are being constructed. New business and property investment downtown continued in a positive direction.

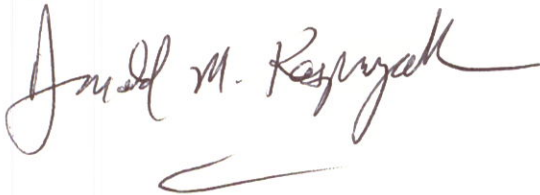
City supported events in 2012 were popular and well attended. The Half Marathon grows each year in participation and attendance. National fishing tournament presence remained strong. The Fourth of July, Mayor's Cup & Regatta, Rockeater Adventure Race, Adirondack Coast Wine and Cider Festival, RV Show, ABA Home Expo, Perrotte Motorsports Show, Roller Derby, soccer camps and tournaments, and Battle of Plattsburgh events brought visitors and participants to the area. Charity walks and runs are growing in popularity as well. We are presently working closely with groups interested in bringing exciting new events to the area in 2013.

We again refinanced our bond obligations at a lesser interest rate and continue to bid city services saving taxpayers dollars. We successfully defended lawsuits against a retired fireman and a present fireman seeking lifelong disability benefits which would have had a profound financial effect on the taxpayers. We applied and received DEC and Town of Plattsburgh Planning Board permit approvals for Alkaline Treatment at the Compost Facility when the need arises.

Our list of 2013 priorities will be challenging and key to Plattsburgh's future. We must restructure the Fire Department as the present model is no longer affordable or efficient. New building code requirements have resulted in safer construction yet fire department costs continue to increase especially with the recent generous arbitration ruling. The region has three well trained volunteer companies close to city borders and there must be changes that can incorporate their services directly to accommodate and protect our residents and business owners. Local drug issues continue to escalate and we must find solutions and resources to address this growing concern. We will continue to focus on the development of city properties which will add to our tax base. The Capital Projects list will address city infrastructure needs. We will seek additional revenue by actively selling several city surplus properties. We will be aggressive in pursuing the future plans for the 460 Margaret Street property. City departments will begin implementing a time and attendance program. We are presently negotiating with several city unions with the hopes of settling fair contracts for all involved including the taxpayers. There must be serious policy changes to the Triborough Amendment and binding interest arbitration this year by Governor Cuomo and the Albany Legislature to assist statewide municipalities in dealing with purposely delayed union negotiations and unfair and unaffordable PERB decisions. Pension reform is a necessity as these costs are unsustainable for every municipality in New York State. And, we have an obligation to improve accountability and proficiency every year.

In closing, 2013 will once again be a challenging year for the City of Plattsburgh as retirement, personnel, and healthcare costs continue to rise at accelerated rates. Without a doubt, this will have a direct impact on future city services, tax and utility rates, and the way we govern and manage our city. We will pursue any and all cost saving opportunities in 2013 to insure and maintain the quality of life that is special and unique to North Country residents. It has been an honor and a privilege serving as the Mayor of the City of Plattsburgh. Plattsburgh is a wonderful community and we will do our best for the people we represent as we all move forward together in 2013. Thank you.

Mayor Donald M. Kasprzak

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Donald M. Kasprzak". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.